

Secretary Shells Out Letter to Congressman Bishop Regarding DOT Proposed Peanut Ban

Washington, DC – Congressman Sanford D. Bishop, Jr. (GA-2) today received a letter from Secretary of Transportation, Ray LaHood, stating that the Department of Transportation (DOT) will not ban peanuts from airplanes. The DOT clarified the proposed notice that explicitly states that the DOT will comply with Section 346 of the DOT and Related Agencies Appropriations Act of 2000, Pub. L. No. 106-69.

Congressman Bishop said today, “This is great news for all peanut producers, especially those in Georgia. We have a long and proud history of peanuts in Georgia, and it has been a privilege to do all I can to protect this vital part of our state’s economy.”

The law requires that a peer-reviewed scientific study must be conducted first to determine that there are severe reactions by passengers to peanuts prior to issuing any prohibitive measure regarding peanuts and peanut-products on airplanes.

The letter came in response to a June 10, 2010 letter from Congressman Bishop to Secretary LaHood reminding the Secretary that the DOT is prohibited from banning peanuts from airplanes.

The full text of Secretary LaHood’s letter to Congressman Bishop follows:

Dear Congressman Bishop:

Thank you for your letter expressing your views about the U.S. Department of Transportation’s June 8 notice of proposed rulemaking covering various consumer protection issues, including greater access to air travel for persons with peanut allergies.

You will be pleased to know that the Department is issuing a clarification today to the proposed notice that explicitly states that the Department will comply with Section 346 of the Department of Transportation and Related Agencies Appropriations Act of 2000, Pub. L. No. 106-69. As you know, Section 346 states that no carrier will be required to provide a peanut- restricted area until 90 days after submission to both the Congress and the Secretary of a peer-reviewed scientific study that determines there are severe reactions by passengers. I have enclosed a copy of the clarification for you review.

In accordance with Department rules applicable to pending proceedings, a copy of your letter and this response will be place in our rulemaking docket.

If I can provide additional information or assistance, please feel free to call me.

Sincerely yours,
Ray LaHood

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